Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 09185 161759Z
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS DIVISION: PROPOSALS FOR STAFF INCREASES AND STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

REF: GENEVA A-166

1. IN CONTINUING TALKS WITH HRD DIRECTOR, MISSOFF LEARNED THAT VAN BOVEN IS STRUGGLING WITH THE ISSUE OF HOW TO INCREASE HIS STAFF IN THE AREAS OF HUMAN RIGHTS PROCEDURES AND VIOLATIONS. HE FACES THE PROBLEM OF HAVING ANY REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL REJECTED BY THE EASTERN BLOC COUNTRIES ON THE BASIS INCREASED FUNDING. A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NEW YORK CONTROLLER'S OFFICE HAS ADVISED VAN BOVEN TO TAKE THE PLUNGE BY RECOMMENDING STAFF INCREASES IN NEXT BIENNUM BUDGET, 1980-81. TO JUSTIFY THE ADDITIONS, HRD WILL HAVE TO PREPARE A PERFORMANCE REPORT STATING THAT THE DIVISION CANNOT COPE WITH THE INCREASED WORKLOAD. A REQUIRED ACCOMPANIMENT TO THE REPORT IS A CHART PROJECTING THE MAN HOURS FOR NEW STAFF. THE PROJECTIONS, ACCORDING TO VAN BOVEN, ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT ASPECT OF THE PROPOSAL. HRD HAS NO SPECIFIC PROJECTS SUCH AS THE UNDP. IN HUMAN RIGHTS YOU HAVE A RISING TIDE OR A FLOOD OF ACTIVITIES DIFFICULT TO CALCULATE IN MAN HOURS.
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PAGE 02 GENEVA 09185 161759Z

2. TO SECURE THESE STAFF INCREASES VAN BOVEN REALIZES HE WILL NEED ALL THE HELP HE CAN GET. HE RECOMMENDS THAT GOVERNMENTS PLEAD FOR STRENGTHENING THE HR MACHINERY IN THEIR "ANALYSIS" REPORTS UNDER THE PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS ITEM (REF A) AND TO RAISE THE ISSUE DURING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHEN THE CPC

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

DOCUMENT IS CONSIDERED.

3. TRYING TO CHANGE THE HR COMMISSION TO A COUNCIL WILL, OF COURSE, BE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT THAN INCREASING STAFF. AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER WOULD BE REQUIRED. THIS, ACCORDING TO VAN BOVEN, IS THE MAJOR OBSTACLE BECAUSE THE SOVIETS WOULD PROBABLY VETO SUCH AN AMENDMENT. HE OPFERED NO SUGGESTION FOR GETTING AROUND A SOVIET BLOCKADE BUT AGREED WITH MISSOFF THAT SUPPORT OF THE NONALIGNED WOULD BE MANDATORY TO CARRY THE PROPOSAL THROUGH UN MACHINERY. VAN BOVEN STRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT THE CHANGE IS NECESSARY IF THE DIVISION AND THE BODY CONCERNED WITH PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS ARE TO BE EFFECTIVE. HE NOTED THAT THE ISSUE HAD BEEN RAISED SEVERAL TIMES IN THE PAST AND RECALLED THAT THE LAST EXPLORATORY TALKS WERE INTRODUCED BY THE INDIANS, TWO OR THREE YEARS AGO.

4. NEAR THE END OF THE CONVERSATION, VAN BOVEN BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS FELLOWSHIPS. HE EXPRESSED SOME UNHAPPINESS WITH THE PRESENT OPERATION IN WHICH HRD PROVIDES THE FUNDING BUT HAS NO CONTROL OVER WHAT RECIPIENTS PRODUCE OR DON'T PRODUCE.

5. TO CORRECT THIS SITUATION VAN BOVEN WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A PERIOD OF TRAINING FOR THE SCHOLARS IN GENEVA TO EXPLAIN THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM, THE UNITED NATIONS AND TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 GENEVA 09185 161759Z

REVIEW THE TOPICS THAT FELLOWS WILL RESEARCH. FOR THIS HE PLANS TO REQUEST ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR THE ADVISORY SERVICES PROGRAM.

6. COMMENT: MISSION WOULD AGREE WITH VAN BOVEN THAT ANY CHANGES IN STAFF OR CHARTER REVISION WILL RUN INTO SOVIET ROADBLOCKS. IF THEY AGREE TO AN INCREASE IN PERSONNEL THEY WOULD SURELY INSIST THAT SOVIET EMPLOYEES BE PLACED IN THE COMMUNICATIONS SECTION OF THE U.N. HR DIVISION. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT DURING THE 34TH HRC SESSION THE USSR DEL COMPLAINED ABOUT THE DIVISION REORGANIZATION WHICH ACCORDING TO THE SECRETARIAT WAS AN EXPRESSION OF FRUSTRATION AT NOT BEING ABLE TO PLACE A SOVIET IN THE COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS AND THUS ASSURE THAT COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE USSR WOULD NEVER SURFACE IN THE SUB-COMMISSION. IF THE U.S. DECIDES TO SUPPORT HRD STAFF INCREASES THIS FACTOR SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.
7. MISSION WOULD ALSO LIKE TO NOTE THAT SOME GENEVA HRC MEMBERS QUESTION AN INCREASE IN STAFF SINCE THE PRESENT PERSONNEL, WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS, FUNCTION ONLY AT MINIMUM CAPACITY. A GREAT DEAL OF TIME IS SPENT BICKERING AND FINDING WAYS TO AVOID ASSIGNMENTS. THESE

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

MEMBERS BELIEVE, AND WE CONCUR, THAT AN INCREASED STAFF WILL NOT NECESSARILY IMPROVE THE PRODUCT NOR WILL IT CREATE INITIATIVES. IF VAN BOVEN COULD ENFORCE SOME KIND OF DISCIPLINE OVER HIS DIVISION ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL MIGHT NOT BE REQUIRED. END COMMENT.

8. MISSION WILL CONTINUE TO REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT DISCUSSIONS OF THESE MATTERS HELD WITH CONCERNED AND INVOLVED PARTIES. VANDEN HEUVEL

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20 Mar 2014
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